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THE ASSOCIATION OF THE BAR
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
42 WEST 44TH STREET
NEW YORK 10036

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MENRELL E. CLARK, JR.
PRESIDENT
40 WALL STREET
NEW YORK 10005

August 16, 1979

The Honorable Cyrus R. Vance
Secretary of State
Department of State - U.S.A.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to express the Association's deep concern over reports that last Friday and again on Tuesday Argentine police raided the offices of three human rights groups in Argentina and confiscated a number of files.

As you know, in April, 1979, the Association sponsored a mission of lawyers to Argentina headed by Orville H. Schell, Jr. to investigate reported harassment and imprisonment of lawyers representing politically unpopular defendants. One of the offices raided on both of the reported occasions was that of the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, a very respectable organization of human rights activists with whom the Association's mission met in Buenos Aires. The Permanent Assembly's members include several lawyers who are among the few in Argentina still willing to prosecute habeas corpus writs on behalf of the 2,500 persons being detained without charges and the thousands who have disappeared in Argentina over the last three years.

Members of the Permanent Assembly have also been actively assisting the staff and members of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States in preparing for its upcoming mission to Argentina. We fear that the police raids on the Permanent Assembly and other human rights organizations may be an effort on the part of the Government of Argentina to intimidate these groups and Argentine citizens from providing assistance and information to the Inter-American Commission.

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part () In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

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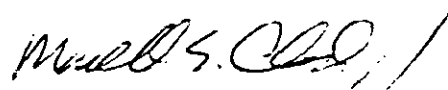
The Honorable Cyrus R. Vance

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We hope that our Government will take vigorous action at the highest level deploring these actions of the Argentine Government and any other actions which could have a chilling effect on human rights activities in Argentina. We also hope that you will seek assurances from the Government of Argentina that human rights organizations will be allowed to continue their activities on behalf of the detained and disappeared in Argentina free from government intimidation or threats.

Yours respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Merrell E. Clark, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Merrell E. Clark, Jr.